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ABSTRACT

In professional development schools (PDSs), personnel from two different cultures come together to form a new, hybrid culture. Sharing the same goals and parity among the participating professionals produce authentic collaboration and are essential aspects of this culture. When parity and sharing are absent, collaboration between schools and universities generally produces some degree of culture shock and culture conflict. Culture conflict occurs when personnel from the two institutions bring to the PDS relationship markedly dissimilar status and goal mixes because the underlying cultural assumptions of schools and universities are different. Workplace behaviors and values clash, producing collaboration shock. Differences in the tempo, focus, and the rewards of work can produce conflict. Experience in PDSs suggests three guidelines for forestalling or ameliorating culture conflict and culture shock and creating a truly collaborative school: (1) tiers of involvement may foster authentic collaboration; (2) providing time and reward for inquiry nurtures the involvement of parties from both institutions; (3) schools and universities should identify self-interests, mutual benefits, and joint goals from the outset. In the "collaborative school" model, school and university professionals share status and goals, and time is allowed for inquiry. School and university faculty staff the PDS and spend about half of their school day teaching and the balance engaged in reflection, research, and teaching in the university's teacher education program. Collaborative schools have an active research agenda, supported by technical assistance from professional researchers. Administrative and financial support are shared. (IAH)

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The *Collaborative School*: Creating a Hybrid Culture in a Professional Development School

by

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of
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School-university relationships in the United States date from the 1800's with personnel from each institution working together in alliances described as "cooperative" and "collaborative".[1] Many institutions, both schools and universities, possess histories of working in concert in various endeavors, the most common likely to be the implementation of student-teaching internships. Our own institution, Winthrop University, is a good example. Originally a normal school, Winthrop has a 100-year history of preparing teachers and a long-standing tradition of working cooperatively with schools in its geographical area.

Today the push is toward the establishment of collaborative efforts known variously as "partner schools," "professional development schools," and "professional practice schools."[2] The common thread that binds these three conceptions is school-university collaboration. Proposals from the vanguard of educational reform argue for a marriage of personnel from the two institutional cultures in creating a third institution, a hybrid that we refer to hereafter as the professional development school (PDS).

These proposals set forth the ideal, but problems can arise when enterprising PDS creators begin to tinker with the actual. In reality, each school or university is likely to be involved in myriad relationships with multiple institutions. We find in our own work in professional development schools that PDS "cultures" begin to develop amidst a history of past relationships and a plethora of

present ones. The professional development school does not exist in isolation, nor does its hybrid culture develop smoothly. The genesis of the professional development school is influenced by the history of past and present school-university relations.

Culture shock can occur when persons from one culture encounter persons possessing the norms and values of another culture. If norms and values of the two cultures are not congruent, culture shock can lead to cultural conflict. We believe that the concepts of culture shock and cultural conflict accurately describe the experiences of many school and university personnel who attempt to create professional development schools by "crossing the borders" of school and university boundaries into the other's workplace.

Personnel who wish to collaborate must juggle a mix of varied relationships as they attempt to create a professional development school. Involvement in multiple PDS relationships simultaneously creates a situation that we describe as cultural conflict and culture shock for both school and university personnel. We argue that essential aspects of the hybrid PDS culture are sharing and parity. Personnel from each of the participating agencies should share the same vision--or the same goals--and the same working status. In light of what we have learned, we propose a radical design for a professional development school--one that insures by its design that egalitarian ideals can be put into practice.

Multiple PDS Relationships

Whether school or university, each institution's history is most likely replete with examples of varied school-university relationships. Moreover, multiple types of school-university relationships are likely to exist between any particular set of school and university participants at any one time. We characterize types of school-university relationships by sameness or difference in the goals and statuses of their participants. Figure 1 shows four types of school-university collaborative relationships we have identified. Status refers to the position of authority in a ranked group, and goal indicates the product or result of the collaborative effort. We emphasize the categories of "status" and "goal" because they pinpoint the areas that distinguish multiple PDS relationships.

[Figure 1]

Associative relationships between schools and universities are those in which participants of differential status link for no common purpose. Members of one institution need access to resources of the other to satisfy a self-interest, one lacking shared ownership or commitment to a common goal. The classic example of an associative relationship occurs when university researchers conduct isolated research projects in the schools. Such projects require no shared planning, and differential statuses of university and school personnel exist since the university researchers routinely plan, initiate, implement, and derive reward from such projects. Another typical

example of association occurs when school districts ask university faculty to present brief inservice programs or workshops. In such associations, personnel from the two institutions resemble ships passing in the night. The course of neither is substantially affected by the other. Associative relationships pose little potential for conflict because two cultural frames of reference--those of school and university--remain separate and rarely collide.

In contrast to associative relationships, cooperative relationships involve either shared goals or equal statuses. Hord emphasized that collaboration requires a shared effort between equals whereas cooperation necessitates only agreement of some type between separate, autonomous parties.[3] In our own work, though, we have determined that it is important to distinguish between types of cooperation because they illuminate the complexity of school-university relationships.

Goal-cooperative collaboration occurs when participants from the two institutional cultures come together to achieve a common purpose, but participants possess differential statuses. Though they share a common goal, they are not necessarily motivated by the same self-interests. An example of goal-cooperative collaboration occurs when school personnel request a particular on site course offered by a professor who possesses expertise in that area. For example, both school personnel and the university professor might share the goal of teachers becoming more proficient in cooperative learning techniques. By virtue of the teacher-student relationship, the professor possesses differential status because he or she must judge the degree to which participants satisfy the course

requirements. Though the goals of school and university personnel might coincide, differential statuses within a course can undermine the spirit of egalitarianism needed for true collaboration. This type of school-university relationship often breeds conflict because the status differential allows one point of view to dominate over the other, i.e., usually the professor's view predominates in university-driven courses.

Status-cooperative collaboration occurs when personnel from the same institution work together to pursue a common goal. Thus, school personnel may collaborate in the pursuit of a goal, and university faculty may do so as well, though the two are not connected in the pursuit of a jointly-conceived goal. It is true that within a particular institution, personnel may differ in authority. For example, principals and teachers may work together, and university projects may involve both senior and junior faculty. What distinguishes status-cooperative relationships, however, is that personnel from the two educational institutions do not mix.

This type of cooperative relationship is probably most rare, but an instance, spawned by efforts to establish a collaborative culture, is revealed in the literature on school-university working relationships.[4] A doctoral student described a project in which school and university personnel began a research project. It soon became apparent that goals differed, and eventually two separate research projects emerged in the same school--one conducted by the teachers and another conducted by the university faculty. The doctoral student acknowledged the participants' surprise at the eventual emergence of two separate collaborative strands and their

bewilderment at the implications of "collaboration through separation." Indeed, what surprised the participants was that their joint collaborative project turned out to be two separate projects in which school and university researchers did not mix.

Status-cooperative relationships hold potential for conflict if participants from one institution cannot accept the goals of those from another. In the case of the research project described above, for example, each status-specific set of collaborators could view the knowledge gained from its research as more legitimate.

In contrast, authentic collaboration is a type of school-university relationship in which participants of the same status work toward common goals. In authentic relationships, representatives from the two institutions of school and university "labor together" or "co-labor" with parity so that neither party possesses a status that leads to an inequitable distribution of power. We believe that true collaborative efforts between schools and universities require mutual planning and goal-setting in which members of each institution share ownership of the goals and subsequent attempts to achieve them.

In our work to establish a professional development school, a clear example of authentic collaboration occurred. School teachers and university professors spent many hours developing a format for special internship experiences unique to middle-level teacher preparation. This enterprise was authentic collaboration because the participants shared a common agenda and participated with equal status in first conceiving the idea and then contributing to the product. In fact, we used a participatory technique that insured the

equal weighting of ideas regardless of perceived differences in power or status among group members.

Tinkering with the Status Quo

Authentic collaboration is the type of working relationship that should exist in the professional development school. The charge given to the professional development school is the creation of a revolutionary environment capable of reforming both teacher preparation and PreK-12 schooling.[5] The expertise of the most accomplished and distinguished professionals in the schools and universities should be brought to the creation of exemplary learning environments for students. The mission of professionals in these schools is to hone and develop further their own capabilities by constantly inquiring into the nature of excellent teaching and learning. The professional development school is to be a radical environment where uncertainty, risk-taking, and the excitement of the unknown are the norm while diverse constituents "push the envelope" of competence and challenge the limits of the known. Teacher-education students enter into this environment and participate with other PDS constituents--teachers, university professors, and the school's students themselves--in a seamless continuum of professional inquiry.

Given the overwhelming magnitude of this radical charge, most schools and universities start in small ways. In fact, they are advised to do so by many who write about the creation of professional development schools.[6] Unfortunately, as school and

university personnel begin to tinker with the status quo in an attempt to work together in new ways, problems can arise.[7] Parties from the school and university can waver between feelings of trust and mistrust as new relationships are forged amidst a tangle of multiple PDS relationships.

Roles and relationships can become muddled as participants alternate in multiple status positions. Persons in such situations might ask: Who is in charge of the research project? Whose knowledge is legitimate? Turf issues can arise as organizational jurisdictions become blurred, the number of bosses multiplies, and persons negotiate for decision-making authority. Participants may be confronted by issues such as: Who is responsible for student teachers' grades? Who decides which persons from public schools sit on university decision-making committees? Who should hire the persons serving as teachers and administrators in a PDS? Communication breakdowns can occur when multiple PDS relationships require a geometric increase in shared knowledge, leading to a question such as: How many people in each institution need to know about changed requirements for a particular course in the teacher-education program? In some cases of collaboration, disputes become so rife with intractable positions that mediation by an outside party might be necessary to arrive at solutions.[8] One such dispute might involve deciding which schools within a geographical area will become or remain professional development schools. Collaboration becomes redefined as a process in which participants from different institutions continually negotiate the power relations necessary to achieve goals defined by both mutual and self interests.

The Clash of Cultures--Collaboration Shock

Collaboration between schools and universities is a special case of culture shock. Cultural conflict occurs when personnel from the two institutions bring status and goal mixes to PDS relationships because the underlying cultural assumptions of schools and universities are markedly dissimilar. Those who have studied the cultures of schools and universities argue that their "workplace" or "organizational" cultures are distinct.[9] Workplace cultures include the totality of modes of thinking and operating within an occupation, including how people view and perform their work. Of special significance are considerations such as work tempo, work focus, rewards for work, and the degree of power and autonomy.[10] Universities, for example, traditionally value research, theoretical concerns, academic freedom and integrity, and high academic standards and ideals. In contrast, schools are oriented toward the practical, have little time for inquiry, and may even possess an anti-scholastic culture.[11]

As school and university personnel collaborate in multiple PDS relationships, differences in workplace-related values often clash markedly. Collaboration shock occurs once participants realize the acute differences in their workplace behaviors and values. Participants are often at a loss to resolve what can be overwhelming feelings of frustration, mistrust, and eventual disappointment. The initial push toward collaboration that frequently begins with a rush

of excitement and exhilaration often ends with dismal feelings of alienation and despair.

Some common examples of collaboration shock might grow from differences in work tempo and work focus. School personnel, responding to immediate needs, may want an inservice course to begin within a few weeks, and university professors, whose schedules are often planned semesters in advance, cannot deliver the course at the time desired. In like manner, professors, who generally value inquiry and scholarly activity, expect teachers in an inservice course to study a topic in depth, and teachers, whose workplace culture is legendary for its hectic pace, rarely have time for thorough, contemplative inquiry.

A second source of conflict may occur due to differences in work focus and rewards for work within the two cultures. Professors, whose workplace culture espouses a specific tenure and promotion process, often devalue any type of school-university collaboration that does not result in scholarly benefit. Because the tenure and promotion process rewards research and publication, collaboration for some other purpose receives a low priority from university faculty and their administrators. School personnel, on the other hand, are likely to prefer activity that ties directly to the nature of their practice--creating an immediate classroom learning environment that, in the opinion of the teacher, "works." There is little interest in empirical analysis or replication of the new approach. Rather, what is important to the classroom teacher is the efficacy of the new approach. In schools, rewards for work are the intrinsic benefits derived from students' successes, and teachers are

likely to demand that collaborative activity result in ideas with direct classroom application. When the university professor prefers a more theoretical orientation, conflict can occur in the form of teachers' dissatisfaction and vocal resistance.

Working Together--Starting Small

Tinkering with the status quo can lead to workplace cultural conflict and, in some cases, irreversible culture shock. Given the problems that can arise, school-university collaborative planners can take reactive steps to remedy the situation or proactive steps to forestall potential problems. From trial-and-error experiences in our multiple PDS relationships, we have developed some ways to accommodate workplace-related differences.

Tiers of involvement may foster authentic collaboration. Ideally, only a few persons from both schools and universities should be involved in authentic collaboration from the start of PDS planning and implementation. A core group within each institution can be identified and advised of the dangers inherent in wearing the many hats required by multiple PDS relationships. For example, PDS participants should be advised to avoid structuring a course in which collaborating professors and teachers cooperate in the traditional teacher/student arrangement of unequal power and authority. If the core group personnel avoid the conflict of unequal status relationships, they increase the likelihood of achieving and maintaining authentic collaboration.

Providing time and rewards for inquiry nurtures the involvement of parties from both institutions. Funding summer institutes with stipends for attendance gives school and university personnel time to plan together. Paying supplements to teachers and university faculty for coordinating PDS activities can enhance enthusiasm. Similarly, scheduling release time for faculty from each institution to assume PDS duties acknowledges the contributions of these efforts to the work expectations of all. University faculty should be encouraged to document their PDS involvement as part of the teaching, service or scholarship required for tenure and promotion.

Schools and universities should identify self-interests, mutual benefits, and joint goals from the outset. John Goodlad, a renowned proponent of educational renewal, recommends a type of school-university relationship he calls a symbiotic partnership.[12] In symbiosis, partners with dissimilar expertise come together to satisfy self-interests, and each must demonstrate a selfless commitment to helping the other achieve the self-serving benefit. As Goodlad acknowledges, it is the selfless commitment part that is difficult to achieve, and, for this reason, history records few symbiotic partnerships in education.[13]

School and university collaborators can use contracts to specify self-interests and collaborative goals from the initiation of the PDS. Accompanying activity planners help to specify means and time-tables for the satisfaction of self-interests and achievement of joint goals required by symbiotic partnerships. When commitment to

mutual interests and means of satisfying them are clear from the start, both are easier to achieve.

The *Collaborative School*

We asked ourselves, "But what if schools and universities did not have to 'start small'?" What if school-university collaborators could start from the outset with the radical task of creating the revolutionary environment most compatible to the PDS? Schlechty and Whitford offer the idea of organic partnerships as preferable to the "fragile and fickle" symbiotic ones recommended by Goodlad.[14] Organic partnerships substitute an ethical ideal of the common good and "boundary-spanning problems" that are "mutually owned" for the self-serving aspects of symbiotic partnerships. Schlechty and Whitford hypothesize that, if schools and university personnel possess sufficient autonomy to create organic partnerships, they will simultaneously create a "common culture" with norms and values unique to the hybrid organization.

Building such a hybrid working relationship requires, at a minimum, the development of consensus-based goals, the definition of roles reflecting equal status, and participation as equals in the making of decisions controlling the purpose and operation of the PDS. Such a vision of professional development schools springs from the work of the Holmes Group, where theoreticians and practitioners work together in a great synthesis.[15] What the Holmes Group has not given us is a working model for achieving this grand scheme.

What egalitarian design would promote authentic collaboration? We propose creation of a *collaborative school*, a model that represents a new professional school paradigm analogous to the teaching hospital of the medical profession. To create a hybrid culture, design of the *collaborative school* should feature shared status and shared goals among professionals. Design should also allow time for the inquiry necessary to advance the profession. Thus, the *collaborative school* as a hybrid institution features a mix of school and university faculty and administrators with access to the technical expertise of a cadre of university researchers. Under this plan, a professional development school would be populated by two groups of school and university faculty, each teaching school-age children for half of the normal school day. The balance of their daily work time would be dedicated to reflection, research, and teaching in the teacher-education program of the participating university.

[Figure 2]

Who would teach in the *Collaborative School*? It seems likely that many school and university teachers would be attracted to a school organized as a *collaborative school*, although only the most accomplished professionals would be selected to participate. Invitations to teach could be limited to those possessing a number of prerequisites, many of which would require special preparation. One likely requirement would be recent, successful teaching experience at grade levels and in communities similar to those characterizing the proposed *collaborative school*. Such experience would establish

teachers' competence and could be documented through peer reviews, administrative evaluations, student assessments and other systematic analyses of teaching. Quality control of instructional expertise in the *collaborative school* must apply equally to school and university personnel. Because the average professor of education has been out of full-time elementary or secondary teaching for twenty or more years, many would have to return for a semester or more to upgrade their experience and sharpen their skills before assuming their duties in the *collaborative school.*[16]

Other qualifying requirements for teachers from both schools and universities might include evidence of comprehensive knowledge of teaching practices and theories of learning, theoretical and practical knowledge of curriculum, and knowledge of research design, collection and analysis. School and university personnel might be required to undertake comprehensive study of these and other elements of the professional knowledge base before qualifying to teach in the *collaborative school.*

While these requirements would narrow the field of eligible PDS teachers, the requirements also would serve as a warranty of instructional integrity and research competence. What is important about the *collaborative school* is not merely that it be established, but that it be created in a manner likely to produce meaningful reform of schooling and teacher education. That school and university personnel might be required to undertake formal preparation for this experience highlights the level of expertise demanded of those who would be a part of this highly professional environment.

How can the *Collaborative School* marry the two cultures? The *collaborative school* approach offers promise of bridging many of the cultural gaps between schools and universities. One of the most compelling aspects of this approach is its redefinition of job expectations for school and university teachers. In most cases, this arrangement would greatly increase the university faculty member's opportunities for contact with school-age youngsters while preserving sufficient time for reflection and analytical scholarship. It also would provide opportunities for applying the theories and techniques university faculty members advance in the preparation of new teachers. Perhaps most exciting is its potential for operating teacher-education programs in settings where constant inquiry into the features of "best practice" is standard. Teacher-education students would study in the *collaborative school*, alternating theoretical studies with first-hand observation, inquiry, and practice. The *collaborative school* paradigm maintains the traditional emphasis on practice while actively promoting the benefits of reflection and inquiry. Faculty would apply theories of pedagogy in real classrooms under legitimate time, pacing, and other real-life requirements, demonstrating the viability of specific practices for themselves, their colleagues, and their teacher-education students.

The *collaborative school* could significantly alter the way graduate studies are organized as well. Most graduate education programs are characterized by extensive theoretical study designed to take graduates beyond initial certification requirements. Stoddart described graduate schools of education as a "third culture" that dichotomizes research and practice.[17] Clinical experiences in such

programs are rare. Students in these programs are often discouraged by what they view as an absence of practicality. The *collaborative school* idea provides opportunities for developing theory through the analysis of practice and for discovering practice through the application of theory. That is, the *collaborative school* serves as a living model of pedagogical theory and practice subject to constant inquiry and reform. Not only can graduate students study the theories of teaching and learning in the *collaborative school*, but they can teach, observe others, and conduct meaningful research under the supervision of exemplary school personnel.

The administration of the *collaborative school*, too, represents an important departure from the systems used in most traditional and laboratory school settings. We foresee a school led by teams of administrators from both the sponsoring school district and the educational administration program of the participating university. The precise assignment of administrative responsibilities of necessity would be a reflection of organizational requirements and the qualifications and experience of those involved. What is important is the opportunity for school and university administrative specialists to work together, experiencing the contemporary realities of school administration. They would work collaboratively with teachers and researchers in building an appropriate environment for teaching, learning, and research. The preparation of aspiring administrators in this setting presents its own boundless opportunities for clinical experience and research.

An active research agenda for all teaching and administrative personnel would be augmented by professionals assigned to the

collaborative school to provide technical research assistance. Ideally, a part of each researcher's time would be dedicated contractually to collaborative PDS activities. Committees of teachers, researchers and administrators would review and authorize worthy proposals for research in a school environment designed to generate new knowledge. The approved studies would then be conducted by teachers, administrators, and researchers. The products of their research would be presented and published by the collaborative teams.

The provision of research support should afford increased opportunities for systematic inquiry into the scholarly interests of school personnel and should increase chances of producing competent scholarship. Outside the *collaborative school* few school or university faculty members have ready access to both school-age students and the assistance of technicians skilled in school-based inquiry. Cooperation with researchers would provide teachers and administrators opportunities for testing pedagogical theories and practices while expanding their personal knowledge and, potentially, building of a record scholarship. The rapidity with which the products of research can make their way into classrooms represents an additional significance of this approach.

While the *collaborative school* described here might be summarily dismissed by some as financially or politically unworkable, we believe that educators committed to advancing knowledge in an environment of mutual respect and cooperation can overcome the predictable obstacles. Financial responsibilities could be shared, since the school district shoulders the expenses of physical

plant operations and personnel costs for its own teachers and administrators while the university assumes responsibility for costs related to the teachers, administrators, and researchers it assigns to the *collaborative school.* Both agencies could gain politically from this arrangement as the school district staffs a school with highly competent teachers and administrators while the university creates a highly cost-effective center for pedagogical practice and inquiry. The specifics of finance and other considerations, of course, will vary from situation to situation. It seems likely, though, that the benefits of creating a *collaborative school* are more compelling than the opposing obstacles. What is required is a commitment to reforming schooling and teacher education and a willingness to tackle the difficult details collaboratively.

Epilogue

The Holmes Group has suggested the professional development school as a means to simultaneously reform schooling and teacher education. Although the PDS concept is intriguing, its implementation has been by trial and error. To operate efficiently professional development schools need to reconcile the conflicting values and norms of schools and universities as separate workplace cultures.

In the *collaborative school,* faculty, administrators, and researchers from schools and universities have a unique opportunity to make a difference in both schooling and teacher education. Here

they come together and merge their roles in a synergistic environment where theory and practice inform each other.

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Notes

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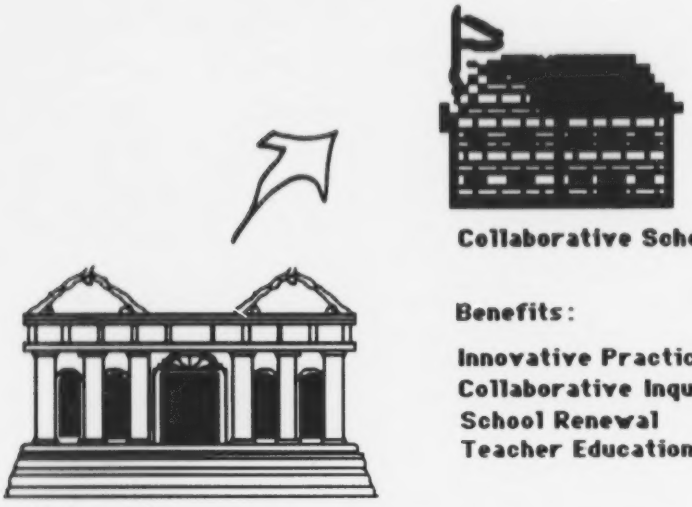
Figure 1.

Professional Development School Collaborative Relationships

GOALS	STATUS: *Different*	STATUS: *Same*
Different	ASSOCIATIVE	STATUS-COOPERATIVE
Same	GOAL-COOPERATIVE	AUTHENTIC

Figure 1

The Collaborative School:
A Proposal for Authentic Partnership



Collaborative School

Benefits:

Innovative Practice
Collaborative Inquiry
School Renewal
Teacher Education Reform

University

Contributions:

Teaching Faculty
Researchers
Teacher Education Interns
Administrative Interns

School District

Contributions:

Teaching Faculty
School Administrators
Pupils
Physical Plant